

## *A Statewide Organization*

Conservation Districts of Iowa—CDI is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization devoted to providing educational programs on the conservation of soil, water, and other natural resources.

CDI was founded in 1947 to provide a unified voice for the individual county-based soil and water conservation districts. Since that time, CDI has been working with the 100 soil and water conservation districts in Iowa to promote sustainable agricultural practices for the protection of soil and water resources. Today, work is also being done in urban settings, promoting conservation practices for homeowners, developers, and communities.

While each soil and water conservation district maintains its own programs, CDI helps districts combine efforts to address regional, state, and national issues.

### *Become a Friend of CDI*

Your contributions will help our organization further the conservation effort in Iowa. Consider making a donation today. We are a 501(c)3 organization.

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**email** \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Gift Amount**

\_\_\_\_\_ \$25

\_\_\_\_\_ \$50

\_\_\_\_\_ \$100

\_\_\_\_\_ \$250

\_\_\_\_\_ \$500

\_\_\_\_\_ other

*Please send this form and your  
check made out to:*

**Conservation Districts of Iowa  
3829 71st Street Suite F  
Urbandale, Iowa 50322  
(515) 278-5362  
FAX (515) 727-2212**

*August 2000*

## *Conservation Districts of Iowa*

**Providing education  
and leadership through  
local Soil and Water  
Conservation Districts  
to promote conservation  
of natural resources.**

## *How Conservation Districts Work*

Conservation districts in Iowa are managed by five commissioners elected on the general ballot in each county. With assistance from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship-Division of Soil Conservation, commissioners address the natural resource issues that are most critical in their districts.



If you are interested in becoming a commissioner, contact your local soil and water conservation district. Elections are held in even numbered years.

Many volunteer opportunities exist with both the local districts and the NRCS. Most districts appoint assistant commissioners who help with all aspects of district work. The Earth Team is the volunteer organization for the NRCS. For more information contact your local NRCS office.

## *History of Conservation Districts*

In 1937, as the Dust Bowl focused attention on soil erosion, President Roosevelt sent a model law to governors recommending legislation that would allow landowners to form voluntary soil conservation districts. It was recognized then, as now, that local, voluntary efforts are most effective in getting conservation practices established on the land. The legislation was adopted by Iowa's legislature in 1939 and the first conservation district was formed in three Marion County townships in April 1940. By 1952, all of the land in Iowa was served by Conservation Districts.



## *CDI Initiatives*

### **Backyard Conservation— Bringing Conservation From the Countryside to Your Backyard**

This program provides information on how many farm conservation practices can be adapted to urban lots to achieve similar conservation benefits. Districts across the state are promoting this program with workshops, displays, and written information.

### **Iowa Envirothon**

The Iowa Envirothon is an environmental education competition for high school students. Student teams compete on their knowledge of aquatics, forestry, soils, and wildlife. The winning team represents Iowa at the National Envirothon held each summer.

### **Scholarships**

CDI and the CDI Auxiliary award scholarships to Iowa students pursuing studies in agriculture or natural resources.

### **Commissioner Development**

Programs are offered to help locally-elected soil and water conservation district commissioners better fulfill their responsibilities.